

Human Rights Now



Oral statement on agenda Item 3 ID

Clustered ID with SR on hazardous substances and wastes & SR on water and sanitation

UN Human Rights Council 24th Session,

Geneva, 9-27 September 2013 Speaker: Ms Yuriko Moto

On August 21 2013, Japanese Authority admitted the leak of hundreds of tons of radioactive water from the Fukushima nuclear plant and declared the situation as a "serious incident" of level 3. Although the Japanese Prime Minister has assured that the situation is under control in the latest IOC meeting, his remark does not reflect the critical situation on the ground at all. We wish to draw Council's immediate attention of the situation as a grave human rights and environmental crisis.

Due to the accident in Fukushima, huge amount of radioactive materials contaminated East Japan. However the government fails to provide sufficient measure to protect rights to health of people. Many people including children still live in highly contaminated areas without any protective measure. Recent government study shows that over 43 children have been either diagnosed or suspected to have thyroid cancer.

In this regard, we appreciate that the UN Special Rapporteur on rights to health, Mr. Grover submitted his mission report to Japan and made comprehensive recommendations in May this year. However, the Japanese government clearly rejected most of the recommendations, based on its underestimation of low level radiation. Currently, the government attempts to decide extremely insufficient basic policy on the remedy of this accident, without any public hearing of the victims. The TEPCO and the government fail to disclose critical information of status of the power plant and contamination.

In order to prevent further damage of environment and people's rights to health beyond the national border, we call on the both Special Rapporteurs on hazardous waste, as well as the water and sanitation to visit Japan. We call the rapporteurs to investigate the situation and urge the government to take appropriate measures immediately.

Thank you.